

I rise today, even though feeling a little bit under the weather with an obvious cold, to show my support for these free trade agreements, because we have worked hard from day one in this Congress to be a voice for what I believe to be true free and fair trade agreements that put us and America on an even playing field with other countries around the world.

South Korea, Colombia, and Panama represent 250,000 jobs. It can't be any simpler than that. I listened to the President come up and present his jobs speech to us as we sat in this Chamber, and I heard my colleagues talk about the length of delay it took to get these agreements up to this House. But I'm not going to look to the past. I'm going to look to the future. And I'm going to look at the areas where we can find common ground to advance the cause of the great American economic recovery that could start and will start with the passage of these free trade agreements.

I applaud the President for sending these agreements up here today. I'm very confident that after a thorough and loud debate on these issues, they will be passed, and we will move forward to a brighter day of an additional 250,000 jobs in America and \$13 billion worth of enhanced economic activity for the American market. Back in the 29th Congressional District that I am proud to represent, that is real money, those are real jobs, and what we're going to talk about are improvements in our agricultural industry, be it our grape growers, be it our wine producers, be it our apple growers, be it our dairy industry.

But we're also proud in the 29th Congressional District to represent some of the highest tech and manufacturing operations in the entire world. A little company in the city that I come from, Corning, Incorporated, in Corning, New York, has had a longstanding business relationship in South Korea, producing LCD glass and other high-tech materials and manufacturing components.

To me, these free trade agreements are fair agreements and they lead to job creation. That's what we were sent here to Congress to do, is to put America in a better economic condition so that generations of tomorrow will have the prosperity to call this great Nation home for many generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Again, I appreciate the gentleman from New York for his leadership on this key jobs issue.

With so many Americans out of work, the President was standing in this Chamber not too many days ago urging Republicans and Democrats to come together to create new jobs. Can you imagine if there was an issue that the White House and Congress both agreed on, that Republicans and Democrats across the spectrum supported, a bill that created jobs not by government spending but by allowing the free market to do its work, to granting eco-

nomie freedom to Americans to buy and sell and compete in key markets throughout the world?

Well, today we have that issue. It is the three pending sales agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama. As we have said tonight, they represent almost \$13 billion of new sales for American companies, because we know we have to seek and compete and win around the world for these new customers. We know, too, that these agreements have been delayed far too long. Colombia is an old and trusted friend who's made remarkable progress in the economy, in labor rights, in human rights, in environmental issues. Today we're on the cusp finally of passing a free trade agreement that recognizes our security relationship and our economic relationship. Today we have that opportunity.

I thank the President for sending these agreements to us. As late as they were, the fact of the matter is he has made each of them better, has helped increase and improve bipartisan support for all three, but each day we delay, we lose jobs in America. Each day we delay, Canada and Europe and China and others move ahead of us, take our customers and our jobs. It's time for the delays to end. It's time for Republicans and Democrats to come together and pass these three trade agreements for America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S 2012 BUDGET REQUEST ACT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112-62)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's 2012 Budget Request Act. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed 2012 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For 2012, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$10.9 billion.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 3, 2011.

□ 2020

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCSHON). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Congressional Black Caucus is pleased, and we thank the Democratic leadership for allowing us, once again, to come to the floor for the Democratic hour.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. First of all, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on the subject under discussion this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. At this time, I am joined by two of my colleagues. I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Ohio, who, for 2 years religiously, had the responsibility in the last Congress to lead us in these Special Orders—with a lot of conviction and great information to share with the American people.

Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE of Ohio.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Representative CHRISTENSEN for anchoring today's timely CBC Special Order on unemployment in the African American community and on job creation.

It is no secret that the unemployment rate for African Americans is almost twice that of the national unemployment rate. Studies show that 16.7 percent of all African Americans are unemployed. It's probably closer to 20 percent when you take into consideration those who have given up looking for jobs or who are severely underemployed. In some cities, it is nearly three times the national unemployment rate.

Mr. Speaker, the people I represent are not talking about budget cuts, and they're not talking about continuing resolutions. The people in my community are talking about being laid off, and they're talking about losing their homes while they're still trying to provide food for their families. We are in a crisis that will undoubtedly affect our children and our grandchildren as 11 percent of all American children have at least one parent who is unemployed.

What does that mean for them?

It means fewer opportunities, and it means fewer meals.

As a Nation, we have always prided ourselves on defining "success" as providing a better future for our children. That's why my colleagues and I are speaking out today. That's why it is absolutely essential that we begin to make changes that will help our people get back on their feet. We must do something to create jobs, and we must do it now. I hosted a telephone town hall on the economy a few weeks ago.